Revised: 3-21-05

2004-2005 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education

Cover Sheet		Type of School: X Elemen	taryMiddleHighK-12
Name of Principal(S	Mrs. Teres Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs.,	a Johnson Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the	he official records)
Official School Name_		mentary School d appear in the official records)	
School Mailing Addres	6700 Eagle (If address i	Street s P.O. Box, also include street address)	
Ventura		CA	93003-0599
City		State	Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)
County Ventura		School Code Number	56-72652-6097034
Telephone (805) 289-1	734 X 1011	Fax (805) 289-9987	
Website/URL http://wy	ww.ventura.k12.ca	.us/vusd/portola.htm_E-mail_	tjohnson@vtusd.k12.ca.us
		application, including the eligital information is accurate.	bility requirements on page 2, and
		Date	
(Principal's Signature)			
Name of Superintender		e-Arriaga s., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)	
District Name Ventur	a Unified School I	District Tel.	(805) 641-5000 ext. 1013
I have reviewed the incertify that to the best of			bility requirements on page 2, and
		Date	
(Superintendent's Signatu	ure)		
Name of School Board President/Chairperson	— Mrs. Debbie	Golden s., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)	
I have reviewed the incertify that to the best of			ility requirements on page 2, and
		Date_	
(School	Board	President's/Chairper	rson's Signature)

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

[Include this page in the school's application as page 2.]

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

- 1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
- 2. The school has not been in school improvement status or been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2004-2005 school year.
- 3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, it has foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.
- 4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 1999 and has not received the 2003 or 2004 *No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools Award*.
- 5. The nominated school or district is not refusing the OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
- 6. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if the OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
- 7. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school, or the school district as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
- 8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district: <u>17</u> Elementary schools

4 Middle schools

0 Junior high schools

3 High schools

4 Other (Alternative and Continuation High Schools)

28 TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: \$5,984.00

Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \$6,542.21

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

[] Urban or large central city

Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area

[X] Suburban

[] Small city or town in a rural area

[] Rural

4. 8 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

N/A If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of	# of	Grade	Grade	# of	# of	Grade
	Males	Females	Total		Males	Females	Total
PreK	20	28	48	7			
K	35	39	74	8			
1	52	38	90	9			
2	41	47	88	10			
3	43	56	99	11			
4	55	38	93	12			
5	47	56	103	Other			
6							
		TO	TAL STUDE	NTS IN THE AP	PLYING SO	CHOOL →	595

6.	the students in	composition of the school: 5 % Black or Africa 5 % Hispanic or Lat 11 % Asian/Pacific Is 1 % American India 100% Total *Includes Multiple/No Residue standard categories in reporting the racial/ethn	ino lander* n/Alaskan Native sponse and Filipino
7	•		•
7.		ver, or mobility rate, during the past year:15_uld be calculated using the grid below. The answer	
	(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	37
	(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	47
	(3)	Subtotal of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	84
	(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	547
	(5)	Subtotal in row (3) divided by total in row (4)	.15
	(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	15
 8. 9. 	Number of lar Specify langu Korean, Italia	sh Proficient students in the school:9 %48 Total I aguages represented:14 ages: French, Spanish, Non-Eng., Russian, Aral an, Rumanian, Vietnamese, Gujarati and Engli ble for free/reduced-priced meals:40 % *	
<i>7</i> .		umber students who qualify: 155_* * based on enrollment of students in Grades 2-5	5 in 2003-04 assessed by STAR

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families or the school does not participate in the federally-supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10.	Students receiving special education services:	<u>7</u> %			
		39 Total	l Number	of Students S	Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

0 _ Autism	0_Orthopedic Impairment
Deafness	2_Other Health Impaired
0 Deaf-Blindness	9_Specific Learning Disability
0Emotional Disturbance	_28_Speech or Language Impairment
0_ Hearing Impairment	0 _Traumatic Brain Injury
0_Mental Retardation	
0_Multiple Disabilities	Emotional Disturbance

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

Number of Staff

	Full-time	Part-Time
Administrator(s)	1_	
Classroom teachers	23	2
Special resource teachers/specialists	1_	3
Paraprofessionals Support staff	<u> </u>	<u>5</u> 7
Total number	31	17

12. Average school student-"classroom teacher" ratio: Grades K-3 = 19 students
Grades 4-5 = 34 students

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. The student dropout rate is defined by the state. The student drop-off rate is the difference between the number of entering students and the number of exiting students from the same cohort. (From the same cohort, subtract the number of exiting students from the number of entering students; divide that number by the number of entering students; multiply by 100 to get the percentage drop-off rate.) Briefly explain in 100 words or fewer any major discrepancy between the dropout rate and the drop-off rate. (Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates and only high schools need to supply drop-off rates.)

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	95%
Daily teacher attendance	97%	96%	98%	97%	97%
Teacher turnover rate	**5%	**10%	**12%	**30%	3%

^{**}Staffing allocations decreased by one teacher each year.

PART III - SUMMARY

"Portola shines!" This is our school's motto, current status, and our long-term vision. To assure the realization of the Portola Elementary School vision, it is our collective mission to provide a highly-effective standards-based, student-centered educational program, which promotes equal access for each student in all academic, creative, and social venues. Our strategies, which are integral to bringing our vision to fruition, are diverse, yet focused on student achievement, ongoing assessment, and the integration of its many-faceted data-based results into the teaching/learning process. Our focus of schoolwide-articulated best practices based on current educational research strengthens student learning over time and is significantly enhanced by explicit collaboration via frequent grade level and cross-grade level cyclical inquiry. Clearly identified, measurable goals are then scripted at the beginning of trimesters one, two and three for each grade level, class, and individual non-proficient student, with specific interventions designed to ensure that truly no child is left behind.

Based on these shared beliefs, high energy, and clear focus regarding goals for student learning and social development, Portola does, indeed shine! Moving from "low performing" statewide academic status in 1997 to earning a 10 out of 10 in both Statewide and Similar Schools Academic Performance Index Rankings in 2004, we truly are proud of our dynamic classified and certificated staff, extremely supportive families and Parent Teacher Association, and most importantly, our 595 exceptional students, for whom the synergy created by our entire school community is dedicated. Our diverse population consists of 40% socioeconomically-disadvantaged students who come from families speaking fifteen different native languages, and whose mobility rate ranges annually from fifteen to twenty percent, have steadfastly demonstrated that, given the opportunities to learn, they do, and at very significant levels. Dr. Charles Weis, the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools, in his press release for 2003-2004 Ventura County API rankings stated, "In addition, we will help spread successful instructional practices from schools that are closing the achievement gap and have all subgroups scoring in the 800 (all subgroup scores are actually above 847) range, such as Portola Elementary School…in the Ventura Unified School District". Unequivocally, all children can and do learn at Portola.

Portola's campus is a safe, serene, inviting setting whose inhabitants are engaging and orderly, both students and adults alike. There is a strong sense of purpose and pride, with over twenty-seven percent of its enrollees requesting inter- or intra-district transfers from other schools in order to attend Portola. The school's layout is conducive to learning, with grade level pods containing classrooms, covered outdoor learning areas, bookrooms, teacher conference rooms, and restrooms for each grade, all made possible by the largess of the citizens of Ventura, who passed a school facilities bond for \$81,000,000 in 1997. From 1998-2000, Portola underwent a 98% modernization, with students in attendance during most of this process. Just as the site and surroundings improved, so did the levels of learning and academic accolades for students and staff alike.

Success begets success, and as Portola's students and staff delved more intensely into standards-based instruction and closing the achievement gap for all students, so too did they focus on other factors relevant to overall student success. The addition of a recognized conflict resolution curriculum for grades K-5 in 1998 lead to the schoolwide adoption of a common "I Care" language, which is integral in daily conversations through today, the advent of a dynamic peer mediation program with over 65 third through fifth graders annually trained to assist on the playground, in classrooms and at assemblies, and with the added academic bonus of very little time needed to resolve disputes or address disciplinary issues. In 2001, Portola was selected as a National Champion School for Kindness and Justice, and currently serves as a model school for sites who elect to implement these programs. Portola truly is a special place because of the intense vested interest and caring demonstrated by each of its many members.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. ANALYSES OF CALIFORNIA'S PERFORMANCE LEVELS AND PORTOLA'S ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Portola students and staff have, each year since 1998, demonstrated their commitment to high levels of achievement and commitment to closing the achievement gap for all students, regardless of their ethnic or demographic status. Labeled a "low-performing school" in 1998, Portola's ascent to top statewide and similar schools rankings, 10 and 10, in 2004, truly demonstrates its commitment to meeting and exceeding the federal No Child Left Behind act, which requires all students to perform at or above proficiency levels determined by each state's standards-based assessments by 2014. To reach these goals in California in English Language Arts (reading) and Mathematics, Portola's numerically significant subgroups, scored the following Academic Performance Indexes (API): Hispanic 854; Socioeconomically-disadvantaged 847; White 895; with All Students earning a growth API of 884, which was later changed to the 876 due to Grade 3 CAT6 base adjustment for 2004. The API indexes, which are based on the more-heavily weighted criterion-referenced California Standards Tests (CST) in English Language Arts and Math as well as the norm-referenced California Achievement Test (CAT6), which measures achievement in reading, math, spelling and social science, create California's Standardized Testing and Reporting program (STAR), along with the School and District Participation Rate, which consists of percentages of students assessed in comparison with the total population. Portola's participation rate for 2004 was 99.8%. All of these factors culminate in determining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). In 2003 and 2004, Portola exceeded all requirements for AYP.

Portola Elementary School's California Standards Tests for Grades 2-5 are highlighted in pages 17 through 23, for four years of English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments from 2000-2004.

Of special interest are scores from STAR, which highlight Portola's academic successes and have earned Portola a top 10% ranking of all similar and statewide schools in California, in addition to its Title I status in 2003-2004! Consistent growth, from a statewide ranking of 8 in 2002, to a 9 in 2003, and now a 10 for 2004, truly demonstrates the commitment to academic excellence by students and staff at Portola.

- 1. All significant Schoolwide Subgroups, Socioeconomically-Disadvantaged, Hispanic, and White, attained API Subgroup Scores over 847.
- 2. CST Schoolwide Mathematics proficiency scores indicate that 51% of all students assessed are Advanced, with 33% Proficient, resulting in <u>84% of all students at mathematical mastery levels</u>. Also of note is that 0% scored at the Far Below Basic level, 2% scored Below Basic and only 12% were Basic. In addition, 80% of Socioeconomically-disadvantaged Students scored at mastery levels, with 40% Advanced and 40% Proficient.

The <u>California Governor's Incentive and Performance Awards</u> acknowledge those schools that demonstrate significant improvement based on several measures. Portola Elementary School qualified for these awards in 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004.

2. DATA-BASED STUDENT AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS AT PORTOLA

Close collaboration among the Portola Elementary School staff ensures that instructional programs are monitored, evaluated and improved on a regular basis. Thorough cyclic examination of student assessment results, state standards and item analyses, curriculum differentiation, grade level, cross-grade level and whole school articulation, and needs assessment surveys determine staff trainings and actions which increase effectiveness of classroom instruction and intervention efforts.

In-depth analyses of STAR, VUSD ELA and Math Benchmarks, and specific fluency components of Results Assessments are the foundation for daily, unit, and yearlong instructional planning. Backward-mapping each trimester, based on trimester assessment data, culminates in written plans by grade level, class, and for each student who is not yet at proficiency levels in ELA and/or Math. The advent of computerized assessment tracking through VUSD's comprehensive Edusoft program has proven to be an excellent tool in facilitating data usage, as well as curriculum design, pacing and intervention efforts. Specific, targeted interventions occur before, during school in both classrooms and Learning Center, after school, on Saturdays, "banked" afternoons, and during the summer. Portola teachers dedicate many hours above and beyond the school day in providing these interventions.

The School Site Council, consisting of classified and certificated staff, and parents is the official governing body that meets regularly to discuss programs and components that enhance the school's academic performance, determine School Improvement Program funding allocations, and approve the annual School Plan which outlines site AYP goals. Services provided by categorical funds which assist underperforming students meet standards are: from ELL and ELAC, paraeducators for specific language-related frontloading instructional support, intervention and coaching; from Title II, staff development and data analyses for improved instruction and specific interventions; from Title V, paraeducator time for the Learning Center, as an innovative model program for reading and math intervention for non-proficient students; and from GATE (Gifted and Talented Education), staff development in differentiation in curricular design and implementation. In addition, Portola has both an English Learners Advisory Council and a GATE Advisory Council, with a parent member from each delegation who represents the special needs of their respective groups formally on School Site Council.

3. PORTOLA'S COMMUNICATION REGARDING SCHOOL SUCCESS

Communications regarding Portola Elementary School's student performance and assessment data are shared in a wide variety of ways, from VUSD annual notices, individual CELDT, STAR and GATE reports of assessment results, and televised Board of Trustees meetings to site newsletters, SSC, ELAC, GATE and PTA meetings, to teacher memos and reward coupons for significant achievements.

The State-mandated School Accountability Report Card formally reviews all facets of STAR assessments in ELA, Math and now science, with Academic Performance Indicators and Adequate Yearly Growth goals attainment, along with demographic, attendance, safety, and health curricula and cultural information. The School Plan, revised, reviewed, and approved annually by School Site Council delineates academic growth, growth goals, and funding allocations designated to address collaboratively determined needs.

Portola's website is located within the VUSD website (www.ventura.k12.ca.us). It contains information regarding STAR, the school calendar including testing dates, upcoming events, teachers' philosophies of learning, SARC, and other schoolwide information. Parent Connect is an online service for parents, which allows them to review student attendance, assessment results and classroom information. Local newspapers also report on Portola's progress.

Informal calls and conferences, progress reports, formal twice-yearly parent/teacher conferences, report cards, intervention, at-risk of retention, and Learning Center agreements, and Accelerated Reader quiz results are all components of frequent communications between parents, students, and staff. Our staff maintains open-door policies, which invite students and parents to discuss school success and concerns.

The many elements of Portola's schoolwide success which go hand in hand – attendance, safe and orderly campus, rapid improvement in academic performance for all subgroups, "I-Care" language, and peer mediation program, staff and parental dedication – are reviewed at each formal gathering – Back-to-School Night, Open House, awards and cultural assemblies, PTA, ELAC, GATE, SSC meetings – as we continue to promote and ensure our motto and our vision, "Portola shines!".

4. SHARING PORTOLA'S SUCCESSES

Designated a Ventura County Exemplary School in 2003, Portola hosted a week-long window for Ventura County schools to observe many of the best practices we employ in action. Teacher teams to superintendents from across Ventura County attended "Portola's Blueprint for Student Success," which was held March 3-6, 2003. Highlights included our elementary version of Lorraine Monroe's standards-based lesson design, *The Blackboard Configuration*, math taught twice daily with both Harcourt and Excel curricula, and our dynamic Learning Center.

Portola's Learning Center has served as a model for both identified and non-identified students, with certificated and administrative observers from VUSD and other schools across the county. The Learning Center, whose activities are coordinated by our resource teacher who oversees both the resource paraeducator and another part-time paraeducator who is currently funded through a Title V–Innovative Program Grant, is a critical component in determining Portola's success over time. Between 65-70 non-Special Education-identified at-risk students are serviced individually and in small groups for both reading and mathematics frontloading and intervention four days per week. The fifth day is designed for assessing student progress and adjusting intervention instruction accordingly. These services do not supplant, but are in addition to the interventions employed by classroom teachers for these students who fall in the Below Basic and Far Below Basic ranges.

Our most recent curriculum development project evolved from staff's efforts to delineate grade-level expectations using the supplemental writing program, *Step Up to Writing*. The first elementary school in VUSD to contract with Sopris West SUTW staff development trainers, we invited two other elementary schools to join us. (Our district then, based on very positive responses from all three sites, subsequently brought initial and advanced SUTW trainings for all elementary schools.) Although the process was highly valued, the manual and accompanying materials were not user-friendly, nor were the learning levels articulated by grade level. Through grade level and cross-grade level analyses, Portola teachers agreed on specific expectations for each grade, K-5. Then, two of our teachers cross-referenced these expectations with the Riverside County Office of Education correlation between SUTW and Houghton Mifflin English Language Arts curriculum. The manual was then dissected, with grade-level specific manuals and materials created. The teachers then provided monthly grade level inservicing, with initial modeling and subsequent coaching provided for all classroom teachers. Upon sharing their adaptations with other VUSD and Ventura County teachers we are now bombarded with requests for trainings and visitations.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. PORTOLA'S CURRICULUM

Ventura Unified School District provides standards-based, state-adopted core curricula for each of the content areas:

English Language Arts: Houghton Mifflin (HM)

A Legacy of Literacy, used K-5, consists of three core academic components, reading, word work, and writing and language, and is thematically-organized. Through a variety of texts, it promotes reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary for students of all ability levels in the reading component. In the word work component, spelling, phonics and high-frequency words are addressed. In the third component, writing and language, grammar, journal writing, and the writing process are taught. (Step Up to Writing supplements this portion of the writing curriculum.) Theme and summative assessments provide feedback regarding reteaching for proficiency attainment as needed.

Mathematics: Harcourt Brace (HB)

The Harcourt Brace core curriculum is used by Portola teachers in Grades K-5. It provides basic computation, in-depth problem solving, and conceptual critical thinking learning opportunities, which are assessed through frequent math fact tests, journals, and hands-on experiences. Students at each grade level receive instruction, which incorporates the five mathematical strands of algebra and functions, number sense, geometry and measurement, statistics, data analysis and probability, and mathematical reasoning, as defined by the California Mathematics Content Standards. (*Excel Math* is also taught daily as supplemental mathematics curriculum.)

Science: Harcourt Brace Science

Students in Grades K-5 study earth, life, physical sciences, and the scientific method using the Harcourt Brace Science curriculum adoption. At Portola, teachers determined essential state-aligned science standards to be taught at each grade level in sequentially preparing all students for proficiency as determined by CST assessments in Grade 5.

Social Science: McGraw-Hill Social Science

The Framework for California Schools is the guide for social studies K-5 curriculum implementation at Portola Elementary School, with McGraw Hill Social Studies as our adopted series, which supports our schoolwide goal of imbedding a strong system of beliefs, culture, history, rights and civic responsibilities.

Art:

Artistic endeavors are highly valued at Portola as well, from the creation of yearlong portfolios in kindergarten classes to replications of the masters by students in the third and fourth grades with a spring artwalk as the culminating activity. From classroom lessons on seasonal topics, to polished dance performances sponsored by PTA, to visits from the Ventura Symphony, Music Van, and former Portola middle and high school band and orchestra performers, to our annual "It's a Family Affair" talent show, we take pride in providing top-quality opportunities, which enable each child exposure to a wide variety of new learning experiences.

2. PORTOLA'S READING CURRICULUM

A Legacy of Literacy, published by Houghton Mifflin, adopted by California, and approved by VUSD is the core reading series used at Portola in Grades K-5. It provides a plethora of standards-based materials for every conceivable special needs group, including ELL, at-risk, and GATE students. With 13 of 24 teachers and principal completing a week-long AB466 (HM) training last summer (and several others slated for both initial and advanced training in Summer, 2005) we have full buy-in for utilizing all HM components and maintaining the required pacing as well.

"Semper fi" – fidelity to the core has become our slogan! In order to facilitate the demands of full implementation and the collaboration for full staff-inclusion, our biweekly one-and-one-half hour staff meetings have evolved into weekly 45 minute staff development meetings, with most administrative details addressed in daily bulletins, memos and e-mails. We focus on pacing, give both theme and summative assessments, with the resultant collective data regarding student competency attainment and item analyses, reviewing and reteaching, and further instructional planning by grade level, all facilitated by our new data-tracking software system, Edusoft. Universal access groups and intervention extensions beyond the core are also used to meet specific student needs. Read Naturally, Merrill, and Accelerated Reader are used extensively as supplements to HM as well. Homework is directly aligned to reinforce daily instruction.

Portola's staff has used and continues to use rigorous diagnostic and trimester benchmark reading assessments for fluency, decoding, comprehension, spelling, and word attack skills in conjunction with both theme (not district-required) and district-required summative assessments. They are dedicated to providing reading instruction for assessed needs and providing interventions specific to each at-risk student's deficit areas.

3. PORTOLA'S MATHEMATICS CURRICULUM

Mathematics is taught twice daily by all teachers at Portola Elementary School, with two separate and distinct approaches. Both are standards-based, and both employ frequent assessments. One is VUSD adopted and California approved. One is supplemental.

Harcourt Math, the VUSD and California Department of Education adopted curriculum, is research-and standards-based. Its focus is computational, rigorous in its approach to problem-solving, and balanced with conceptual understanding strategies. The five mathematical strands of algebra and functions, number sense (1&2), geometry and measurement, statistics, data analysis and probability, and mathematical reasoning are taught and frequently assessed at all K-5 grade levels. The core curriculum is supported by differentiated methodologies for GATE and advanced, ELL, and at-risk students.

Excel Math is taught fully as a supplemental program utilized in Grades 1-5 for four years prior to our current HB adoption. Its components include direct instruction, guided practice, and daily homework sheets which allow for self-checking. Grade level computational skills spiral throughout the curriculum, with new skills constantly added. Portola experienced dramatic gains in 1999 after just one year of its implementation, with incremental growth over time, especially for our then-underachieving significant subgroups (socioeconomically-disadvantaged (40%) and Hispanic (34%) populations). Our total school, SED, and Hispanic populations now score, on the California Standards Tests in Mathematics, above the 84th percentile and are second only in VUSD to the elementary math magnet!

We clearly have demonstrated that with focused instruction, a variety of learning modalities, and targeted intervention, all Portola students can and do learn at high levels, with a negligible gap in subgroup proficiency attainment. Further, the immense, collective esteem and accompanying empowerment which is generated by our students ongoing mathematical success serves as a motivator as we strive to continue to narrow the ELA/Math achievement gap (approximately 25 points school wide). Our goal is that, with the same teachers, student population and incredible work ethic we can and will attain the same ELA proficiency levels in time.

4. INSTRUCTIONAL BEST PRACTICES AT PORTOLA

Improvement over time in closing subgroup achievement gaps *and* attaining the highest similar schools and statewide API rankings (10) has evolved at Portola through the cyclical inquiry method. By examining CST, CAT6 and VUSD Bench-mark assessment data school wide and at all grade levels we determine our highest needs, focus on research-based best practices in those areas, and then search and find inservices by nationally-recognized educational leaders in those areas on which we chose to expand our skills. Keeping our focus field narrow, we began with mathematics, discovered Excel, supplemented our core curriculum without supplanting it, and discovered that the mathematical double-dose *works*! The combination of Harcourt and Excel, taught separately, fully, and daily, is a proven success, with over 84% of our students in Grades 2-5, as measured by CST, attaining proficiency or advanced mastery levels.

Other initiatives sparked by our staff's profound dedication to lifelong learning and embracing of staff development opportunities include *The Backboard Configuration*, which enhances time-on-task, standards statements for each lesson, aim of lesson, and lesson design, *Step Up to Writing* processes and goals by grade level, Peace Works conflict resolution curriculum and "*I-Care*" language which contribute to our safe and orderly school climate and culture of caring which is greatly enhanced by the modeling of peer mediators, trimester backward-mapping for instruction and intervention by grade level, class, and for individual at-risk students, and higher level critical thinking skills emphases through flip-charts and "Marzano 9" practices.

Through active recruitment and due to the socioeconomic needs of our school population (40% free and reduced lunch), Portola was selected to house a Jumpstart Program for three and four year-olds in the fall of 2002. Fifty students daily are prepared with preschool and socialization skills, which immensely enhance their kindergarten experiences. In addition, Portola's kindergarten teachers researched and visited extended-day kindergarten programs in our area, and came easily to the conclusion that the additional hours of instruction could only benefit their students' skills mastery. Though planning time significantly increased, as did their minutes daily with students, they elected to expand their program in the fall of 2004. Assessments to date show that only a few students are not at benchmark mastery levels, in comparison to over half of all kindergarteners at this point in previous years. Top-quality training in K-5 conflict resolution skills became available to Portola in 1998 as a pilot school for The Peace Works Foundation. Motivating presenters inserviced all teachers in both their curriculum and the "I Care" program, which is our universal language for discussing issues, resolving conflicts, and monitoring behaviors. A peer mediation program for students in Grades 3-5 provides training twice yearly for over 65 students who assist in classes, at assemblies, and on our playground. It provides the gold standard of behavior, with many students of varying academic abilities selected for this honor. Our safe and orderly campus is due in large part to the curricular components of our conflict resolution program.

Articulated K-5 best practices include focus, word and math walls, universal access groups, posted grade level standards (in kid-friendly language) and report cards, frontloading for ELL and at-risk students. And always at the core of improving student learning – interventions – before, during, after school, on Saturdays, in the summer, and on banked days!

5. THE IMPACT OF PORTOLA'S STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN RELATION TO STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The cornerstone of Portola's rapid improvement lies in its classified and certificated staffs' dedication in constantly researching new best practices, sharing their discoveries, and the assimilating schoolwide articulation regarding leveled delivery systems, methodologies, and curricula. Three major movements, *The Blackboard Configuration* from Lorraine Monroe, *Classroom Instruction that Works*, by Robert Marzano, Debra Pickering and Jane Pollock, and *Step Up to Writing* from Sopris West, have become ongoing parts of daily instruction at Portola due to in-house staff development and ongoing product-based discussions during staff meetings. The effects of these three movements have had a profound impact on our professional development and students' academic growth over time.

The Ventura County Superintendent of Schools Office (VCSSO) presents inservices annually by nationally recognized educational leaders (Reeves, Wiggins, McTighe, Marzano, Pickering, Schmoker, to name only a few). Over the last five years teachers and the principal have attended most of these presentations, in grade level and cross-grade level teams, or individually based on interest in topics. Other weeklong trainings attended by large numbers of our staff include the Governor's Reading and Mathematics programs, Understanding by Design, and AB466 (Houghton Mifflin). VUSD provided mathematics, writing, ELL, Edusoft, GATE, frontloading and English Language arts inservices. Portola's principal has also attended ACSA's Principal, Curriculum and Instruction, Personnel, and Superintendent Academies. Information from these activities is consistently shared, and is a valued part of our school culture. Ten of twenty-four teachers at Portola this year formed a cluster and embarked on their masters degrees in education, with special emphases on either reading or curriculum development.

Time is always an issue in regard to planning, collaborating, analyzing data, sharing, and for improving instruction. Portola's teachers recognized this need six years ago, and now vote yearly to maintain "banked" time four days weekly in order to have one extended block of time for planning, with students then following a minimum day schedule. This extraordinary commitment to lifelong learning by Portola's staff has served as a stanchion on which its growth and achievements are founded, and with their continued dead-eye focus, will ensure attainment of their vision.

Shine on, Portola, shine!

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

California Standards Tests

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 2

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May
SCHOOL SCORES *	-	-		
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	99%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic	100%	99%	100%	97%
% At or Above Basic	97%	96%	95%	81%
% At or Above Proficient	88%	85%	79%	49%
% At Advanced	52%	54%	48%	13%
Number of students tested	98	96	95	96
Percent of total students tested	99.8%	99.9%	99.9%	99.9%
SUBGROUP SCORES				
1. Socioeconomically-Disadvantaged				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	100%	100%	99%
% At or Above Below Basic	100%	100%	100%	94%
% At or Above Basic	93%	98%	97%	78%
% At or Above Proficient	82%	86%	70%	46%
% At Advanced	39%	55%	43%	5%
Number of students tested	44	42	30	37
2. <u>Hispanic</u>				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	100%	101%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	100%	100%	101%	100%
% At or Above Basic	92%	97%	92%	81%
% At or Above Proficient	81%	84%	76%	42%
% At Advanced	42%	52%	38%	3%
Number of students tested	36	31	32	36
3. White				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	100%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	100%	100%	100%	98%
% At or Above Basic	100%	98%	96%	82%
% At or Above Proficient	94%	87%	81%	53%
% At Advanced	63%	56%	55%	16%
Number of students tested	49	54	53	49

^{*}All data is from the California Department of Education, with the range of participation from 98-101%.

Subject: English Language Arts Grade: 2

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May
SCHOOL SCORES *				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	100%	98%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic	99%	99%	97%	94%
% At or Above Basic	85%	89%	92%	68%
% At or Above Proficient	57%	51%	56%	33%
% At Advanced	24%	20%	24%	10%
Number of students tested	98	96	94	94
Percent of total students tested	99.8%	99.9%	99.9%	99.9%
SUBGROUP SCORES				
1. Socioeconomically-Disadvantaged				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	100%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic	100%	100%	100%	89%
% At or Above Basic	75%	86%	87%	64%
% At or Above Proficient	41%	50%	44%	22%
% At Advanced	16%	24%	17%	0%
Number of students tested	44	42	30	36
2. Hispanic				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	100%	99%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	100%	100%	99%	94%
% At or Above Basic	75%	87%	93%	69%
% At or Above Proficient	47%	42%	45%	26%
% At Advanced	14%	13%	13%	0%
Number of students tested				
3. White				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	99%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	100%	97%	98%	96%
% At or Above Basic	94%	86%	92%	73%
% At or Above Proficient	73%	55%	60%	38%
% At Advanced	37%	22%	32%	15%
Number of students tested	49	54	53	48

^{*}All data is from the California Department of Education, with the range of participation from 98-101%.

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May
SCHOOL SCORES *				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	100%	99%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic	100%	100%	97%	100%
% At or Above Basic	96%	94%	85%	87%
% At or Above Proficient	81%	84%	61%	68%
% At Advanced	58%	51%	15%	16%
Number of students tested	92	100	99	88
Percent of total students tested	99.8%	99.9%	99.9%	99.9%
SUBGROUP SCORES				
1. Socioeconomically-Disadvantaged				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	101%	99%	101%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic	101%	99%	96%	100%
% At or Above Basic	92%	90%	80%	77%
% At or Above Proficient	83%	75%	57%	54%
% At Advanced	59%	33%	16%	13%
Number of students tested	34	33	44	39
2. <u>Hispanic</u>				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	101%	99%	100%	99%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	101%	99%	100%	99%
% At or Above Basic	92%	93%	85%	78%
% At or Above Proficient	83%	84%	59%	53%
% At Advanced	63%	42%	9%	7%
Number of students tested	35	33	34	28
3. White				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	99%	99%	101%	99%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	99%	99%	101%	99%
% At or Above Basic	97%	92%	87%	95%
% At or Above Proficient	76%	85%	67%	81%
% At Advanced	55%	57%	16%	22%
Number of students tested	47	54	51	49

^{*}All data is from the California Department of Education, with the range of participation from 98-101%.

Subject: English Language Arts Grade: 3

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May
SCHOOL SCORES*		-		
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	101%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic	96%	99%	91%	97%
% At or Above Basic	86%	90%	83%	77%
% At or Above Proficient	50%	57%	50%	47%
% At Advanced	21%	20%	10%	7%
Number of students tested	92	101	98	87
Percent of total students tested	99.8%	99.9%	99.9%	99.9%
SUBGROUP SCORES				
1. Socioeconomically-Disadvantaged				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	100%	100%	99%
% At or Above Below Basic	94%	97%	89%	94%
% At or Above Basic	82%	82%	82%	60%
% At or Above Proficient	41%	44%	42%	31%
% At Advanced	15%	6%	2%	5%
Number of students tested	34	34	43	38
2. <u>Hispanic</u>				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	99%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	97%	96%	94%	93%
% At or Above Basic	91%	84%	85%	68%
% At or Above Proficient	45%	45%	44%	36%
% At Advanced	11%	9%	3%	4%
Number of students tested	35	33	34	28
3. White				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	101%	99%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	97%	99%	92%	98%
% At or Above Basic	82%	92%	82%	85%
% At or Above Proficient	54%	63%	56%	60%
% At Advanced	26%	25%	14%	10%
Number of students tested	47	55	50	48

^{*}All data is from the California Department of Education, with the range of participation from 98-101%

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 4

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May
SCHOOL SCORES *				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	100%	101%	101%
% At or Above Below Basic	100%	100%	101%	98%
% At or Above Basic	100%	96%	96%	90%
% At or Above Proficient	91%	85%	84%	72%
% At Advanced	59%	49%	36%	36%
Number of students tested	101	98	84	90
Percent of total students tested	99.8%	99.9%	99.9%	99.9%
SUBGROUP SCORES				
1. Socioeconomically-Disadvantaged				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	101%	101%	100%	101%
% At or Above Below Basic	101%	101%	100%	92%
% At or Above Basic	101%	101%	94%	70%
% At or Above Proficient	83%	88%	85%	57%
% At Advanced	38%	45%	21%	19%
Number of students tested	40	40	33	32
2. Hispanic				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	100%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	100%	100%	100%	96%
% At or Above Basic	100%	94%	92%	82%
% At or Above Proficient	88%	86%	84%	64%
% At Advanced	52%	42%	24%	18%
Number of students tested	33	36	25	28
3. White				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	101%	100%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	101%	100%	100%	96%
% At or Above Basic	101%	98%	96%	92%
% At or Above Proficient	95%	82%	82%	72%
% At Advanced	67%	52%	44%	39%
Number of students tested	54	44	50	51

^{*}All data is from the California Department of Education, with the range of participation from 98-101%.

Subject: English Language Arts Grade: 4

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May
SCHOOL SCORES *	•		•	
% At or Above Far Below Basic	101%	101%	100%	99%
% At or Above Below Basic	100%	99%	99%	98%
% At or Above Basic	95%	94%	92%	85%
% At or Above Proficient	72%	58%	64%	49%
% At Advanced	40%	30%	27%	21%
Number of students tested	101	98	82	89
Percent of total students tested	99.8%	99.9%	99.9%	99.9%
SUBGROUP SCORES				
1. Socioeconomically-Disadvantaged				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	101%	101%	100%	101%
% At or Above Below Basic	98%	101%	97%	98%
% At or Above Basic	88%	101%	91%	76%
% At or Above Proficient	58%	58%	53%	35%
% At Advanced	23%	28%	25%	13%
Number of students tested	40	40	32	32
2. <u>Hispanic</u>				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	99%	101%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	99%	95%	96%	100%
% At or Above Basic	93%	92%	92%	75%
% At or Above Proficient	69%	61%	56%	36%
% At Advanced	33%	17%	32%	7%
Number of students tested	33	36	25	28
3. White				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	100%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	100%	100%	100%	100%
% At or Above Basic	96%	95%	90%	90%
% At or Above Proficient	74%	59%	69%	54%
% At Advanced	44%	39%	27%	28%
Number of students tested	54	44	48	50

^{*}All data is from the California Department of Education, with the range of participation from 98-101%.

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 5

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May
SCHOOL SCORES *				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	100%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic	99%	99%	99%	95%
% At or Above Basic	97%	94%	86%	82%
% At or Above Proficient	79%	68%	61%	36%
% At Advanced	35%	20%	12%	3%
Number of students tested	97	87	92	98
Percent of total students tested	99.8%	99.9%	99.9%	99.9%
SUBGROUP SCORES				
1. Socioeconomically-Disadvantaged				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	100%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic	100%	98%	100%	90%
% At or Above Basic	98%	93%	70%	84%
% At or Above Proficient	79%	62%	43%	26%
% At Advanced	32%	24%	13%	0%
Number of students tested	47	42	30	31
2. Hispanic				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	99%	101%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	100%	99%	97%	90%
% At or Above Basic	97%	96%	75%	73%
% At or Above Proficient	75%	62%	56%	33%
% At Advanced	24%	14%	4%	3%
Number of students tested	37	29	27	30
3. White				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	99%	100%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	99%	98%	100%	96%
% At or Above Basic	97%	92%	91%	87%
% At or Above Proficient	80%	70%	63%	37%
% At Advanced	41%	22%	15%	4%
Number of students tested	41	50	54	54

^{*}All data is from the California Department of Education, with the range of participation from 98-101%.

Subject: English Language Arts

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May	Apr./May
SCHOOL SCORES *				-
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	101%	99%	99%
% At or Above Below Basic	97%	100%	96%	94%
% At or Above Basic	91%	91%	86%	79%
% At or Above Proficient	63%	53%	47%	32%
% At Advanced	30%	13%	17%	9%
Number of students tested	97	88	92	97
Percent of total students tested	99.8%	99.9%	99.9%	99.9%
SUBGROUP SCORES				
1. Socioeconomically-Disadvantaged				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	100%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic	96%	100%	90%	97%
% At or Above Basic	92%	90%	80%	70%
% At or Above Proficient	62%	45%	37%	17%
% At Advanced	28%	14%	10%	0%
Number of students tested	47	42	30	30
2. Hispanic				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	99%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	97%	99%	96%	93%
% At or Above Basic	92%	92%	81%	69%
% At or Above Proficient	60%	44%	29%	17%
% At Advanced	22%	10	7%	0%
Number of students tested	37	29	27	29
3. White				
% At or Above Far Below Basic	100%	100%	100%	100%
% At or Above Below Basic Proficient	98%	98%	98%	96%
% At or Above Basic	91%	88%	92%	85%
% At or Above Proficient	76%	57%	53%	41%
% At Advanced	37%	16%	22%	15%
Number of students tested	41	51	54	54

^{*}All data is from the California Department of Education, with the range of participation from 98-101%.

Grade: <u>5</u>